of the voluntary system by which it was being operated, it failed to achieve the ends for which it was set up; but more serious was the fact that it showed little sign that it would have worked efficiently if it had been granted compulsory powers. The difficulties with which it was faced were admittedly immense. The fit men of military age still engaged in civilian occupations had either been exempted because they were engaged in work of vital national importance, or on some special exceptional ground. The employers from whom it was proposed to withdraw them fought to the last ditch for their continued exemption, and were most unwilling to consider taking on other less experienced labour in their stead. The Unions to which they belonged similarly opposed their withdrawal, and the further dilution which substitute labour would involve. To provide such substitute labour meant robbing those industries and employments which were deemed to be less vital to our national effort, and if it was a ticklish matter to make such a black list, it was no less difficult to induce the businesses concerned to accept their own repression. And although Mr. Chamberlain had been accorded the co-operation of the employment exchanges, he was not successful in making smooth-working arrangements by which these should carry out the very important task

Disappointing results

Difficulties of the Ministry

of placing transferred labour in its new employment.

The result was a great deal of muddle and confusion. Stories got about of men who had volunteered for National Service ; had been thereupon instructed to throw up their present jobs, and hold themselves at the disposal of the Director ; and having done